

Culture and Science of Acorns (I)

Toshio Mitsunaga

Professor Emeritus of Kinki University

101-3, Kashiwabe-cho, Shimogamo, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto 606-0815, Japan

Summary

Acorns are the fruits of beech (*Fagus* L.), oak (*Quercus* L.), evergreen chinquapin (*Castanopsis* Spach.), and tanoak (*Pasania* Oerst.) trees in the family Fagaceae, which are widespread in the Temperate Zone of the Northern Hemisphere. The acorns are in fact types of nuts and the eatable portion is the cotyledon in the seeds. In the pre-farming period, the nuts constituted one of the most important foodstuffs for the ancients in the Eastern Asia, Central Europe and North America. This review is concerned with the culture and science of acorns.